

Newsletter

Stone Family Reunion

President's Message from Betty Handrick Baldwin



2026.

Welcome to the *Spring 2026 Stone Family Reunion Newsletter*. I hope you have all survived the many bad weather events last Fall and Winter around the country. Before we know it, it will be too hot - time to head into the air conditioning for our 122nd Reunion on July 25,

made by the same person: Miss Edna Leola Stone. The trees have been very popular, as it's fun to search for our names on the panels each reunion.



At the 2025 reunion, we welcomed newcomer Terry Miller who came with his wife Sara (Stone) Miller, a regular attendee with her father for many years. (We were sorry to learn that Terry passed away last October.) We were glad to meet Charlene Johnston who came with her mother years ago, but has not been back recently. It was good to see Honorary members (those 80 years or older – we're a hearty bunch) including Dale Dayton, Marleta (Birchard) Shadduck, and David Shadduck. Long time members, also Honorary members, Bob and Jessie (Birchard) Carr travelled from Florida where they recently retired. Bob and Jessie were long-time treasurers, and Jessie had been Chaplain for many years. We missed Honorary member Courtland Birchard, steadfast attendee and occasional program presenter, as he was unable to attend this year.

At the business meeting, Suzanne (Shadduck) Gorman was newly elected to the SFR Board of Directors. With the retirement of Bob and Jessie Carr, Christine Buck is serving as interim treasurer, and Eileen Birchard has assumed the Chaplain's mantle.

After the usual scrumptious meal and subsequent business meeting, John and Christine Buck presented a well-researched program on the origin of the various iterations of the large hand-drawn family trees – all

It's worth coming to the reunion for the meal and for the entertaining programs, so we look forward to meeting new people this year.

Thanks to all who were able to attend the reunion, and to those of you who have contacted us with family news. We typically summarize births, deaths, and marriages in the June reunion invitation mailing. If you have family news, please let us know. Contact information can be found at the end of this newsletter.

The next Stone Reunion will be held on July 25, 2026 and we look forward to seeing our regular attendees, as well as new members or guests. Please join us if you can.

In Honor of the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence

We're all becoming increasingly aware of the approaching 250th anniversary on July 4, 2026. The **Susquehanna County Historical Society** (SCHS) just published Volume 36 of their *Journal*, and listed the names of Revolutionary War Veterans who settled in Susquehanna County. It seems fitting that the **Stone Family Reunion** also honors our ancestors from that list.

Reuben Beebe (1751-1834) – Reuben was from Waterbury, CT and served in various battles against the British in the New York City area. He eventually settled on a farm just north of Little Meadows, PA and is buried in the South Apalachin Cemetery, a short distance from his farm. Reuben's granddaughter, Amorillis Beebe, married James E. Stone whose farm was where Courtland Birchard later lived on Stone Street, north of the Stone Street Cemetery.

Silas Beardsley (1761-1820) – Silas was from Stratford, CT and served in the Revolutionary War in the Connecticut Militia in 1777, in 1779, and again in 1781. He married Catherine Treadwell and had a large family on a farm in Middletown Township (a few miles from Stone Street), and died from a fall from a haywagon. He is buried with his neighbors at the Canfield-Stedwell Cemetery south of Middletown Center. Silas was honored by a special ceremony of the Susquehanna DAR in October 1, 2022, but is not listed in the recent SCHS publication. Silas's daughter, Eunice Beardsley, married Reuben Beebe's son, Joseph and their daughter Amorillis married James E. Stone.

Peleg Baldwin (1770-1846) – Peleg was from Connecticut and joined Captain Nathan Baldwin's Company of the Holbrook Regiment and served 1782-1783 as a drummer boy. Although his military records indicate that he was 17 years of age, his birthyear would indicate that he was only 12/13 years old when he served. Peleg married a neighbor, Anna Turrell, and they lived on a small plot of land on what is now the Dennis and Sheila



Birchard farm on Stone Street. Both are buried at the Stone Street Cemetery.

Andrew Handrick (1753-1819) – Andrew was from Connecticut and enlisted in Charles Webb's regiment in Litchfield, CT in 1776. He was engaged in the battles at Long Island, White Plains, and Harlem against the British. He married Elizabeth Gaylord and they moved to Stone Street with his son, William Gaylord Handrick, approximately where the large stone quarry is now located. Handrick descendants connected with the Stone family when Wakeman Handrick married Urania Stone, but there are several additional connections. Andrew and Elizabeth are buried at Stone Street Cemetery.

Captain Luther Leet (1763-1831) – Luther was originally from North Guilford, Connecticut and served in the Connecticut Militia in 1779, entered again in 1780, and lastly in 1782 with Captain Brewster of Guilford, CT. He married Sybil Plumb and moved to Friendsville in about 1820 after his son, Dr. Calvin Luther Leet, had settled there. The Captain's grandson, Calvin Luther Leet, married Arabella Canfield Stone, daughter of Almira Bostwick and Canfield Stone, Jr. of nearby Stone Street. Captain Leet's burial location is believed to be at Stone Street Cemetery and is the subject of a separate story in this newsletter.

Andrew Canfield (1760-1843) – Andrew was from Litchfield County, Connecticut and served in the 5th Connecticut Regiment during the Revolutionary War. He married Eunice Fairchild

and they settled in Middletown Township with a large family. Land adjacent to their home became the graveyard where they were buried, and is today known as the Canfield-Stedwell Cemetery on Route 858 south of Middletown Center. Andrew Canfield was the 2nd cousin of Canfield Stone from whom most of us descend.

Abner Griffis (1753-1841) – Abner was a Revolutionary War veteran having served under Col. Kiliaen van Rensselaer of Rensselaerwyck, NY. He may have served at the Battle of Saratoga against the British. He later obtained a land grant along the Wyalusing River, settling in Jessup Township near the Bolles Flat. Blackman's history

indicates that the Griffis family was among the first to settle in Jessup in about 1799. Abner married Martha Ann Cunningham and they had a large family. Abner is believed to be buried in Unadilla, NY. The Griffis family has several connections with the Stone Reunion, but the most prominent would be when his great-granddaughter, Lattice Griffis, married Albert J. Stone, one of the founders of the Stone Family Reunion.

All of us in the Stone Reunion are proud of our patriot ancestors who lived in Susquehanna County, PA. If you are aware of others we missed, please let us know.

Stone Street Cemetery – Another Project



We've been fortunate that the Stone Street Cemetery has been kept in nice shape for many years. Previous maintenance projects have generally involved tree and brush removal, fence painting, monument straightening, and mowing. Although the grass mowing and trimming has been done nicely every year, it became apparent that it was time for some more intensive work. In the summer of 2025 Eileen Birchard, her brother Dennis, and some other family members removed some small intrusive weed trees and multi-flora rose from the graveyard perimeter. This involved some chainsaw work and scratched arms and legs from the rose bushes. In late summer, Eileen's sister, Debra Smith, began work on scraping and painting the fence. We initially thought that only the green horizontal

steel pipes would need scraping and painting, but Deb and Eileen found that six fenceposts needed replacement. The fenceposts have a special, tapered shape and need to be custom-made to match the others. John Buck had replaced many of the posts in earlier projects, so he was tasked with making 6 new posts of pressure-treated southern pine (the originals were chestnut). The new fenceposts were installed late in the Fall. As usual, there are a few items that still need some work, but the grass mowing, trimming, fence painting, and post replacements have brought the cemetery back to excellent condition and appearance. Many thanks to Eileen, Dennis, Sheila, and John for their work on this project, but especially to Debra Smith for the extensive scraping and painting over several weeks (*more photos of the project are available on the website at stonefamilyreunion.com*)



Debra and Eileen at Stone Street

The Stone Reunion – Looking Back

1926 – (100 years ago) – The 24th Stone Reunion at Forest Lake had 155 attendees. Officers were **Frank J. Ball, A. J. Stone, Cora Bradshaw, and Edna Stone**. The Finance Committee reported a funds balance of \$15.17 after all donations and expenses were accounted for. Among the announcements were marriages between **Hugh C. Shaw and Hazel Devereaux**, and **Robert Bruce Dayton and Elinor Smith**, births of **Selden Chapin Birchard, Emma Jean Ball, and Winifred Eloise Stone**. The entertainment included **Mrs. Chapel** at the organ and the singing of “My Country Tis of Thee” and “Allegiance to the Flag”. **Lelia Stone** recited “Ma’s Tools”, and recitations by **Ila Stone, Elinor Jean Dayton, and Barbara Griffis** followed.

1976 – (Bicentennial-50 years ago) – **Don T. Birchard**, was President, **Watson Dayton** was Vice-President, **Mary C. Dayton Fata** was Sec/Treasurer, **Kathryn Warner** was Asst. Sec/Treasurer, **Harold Dayton** was Chaplin, and **Dr. G. Richard Handrick** was Historian. The Reunion was held at the Forest Lake Clubhouse and there were 68 attendees. Among the attendees recognized were **Anita (Coy) and Donald Griffis, Betty (Handrick) and Jim Baldwin, Ethyl (Seelmeyer) and Bernard Schroeder**. **Dayton Birchard** gave a report on repairs made at the Stone Street Cemetery using funds from the prior year’s auction. **Watson Dayton** conducted an auction of Reunion merchandise that netted approximately \$90 for the Reunion. In closing the gathering, and by way of honoring the nation’s Bicentennial, **John Birchard** (8 yrs old) recited the names of all the Presidents of the United States.

Do We Have Family From Scriba, NY? – Gananoque, Canada?

One of the interesting things about our website at www.stonefamilyreunion.com is that we are seen and contacted by people around the country who would never know about us otherwise. Last year we were contacted by Henry (Bud) Hall of Salisbury, NC. He is a descendant of a man named **Jehiel Stone of Scriba, NY** and he inquired if our group of Stones was related to his ancestor. We were initially unaware of Jehiel Stone, but did some research. It turns out that Jehiel (1766-1839) was the fourth cousin of our Canfield Stone (1765-1836) and had come from Connecticut and settled in the wilderness along Lake Ontario, just a little east of Oswego, NY where a frontier fort was located. His home became the first log cabin in the community later known as “Scriba”. Jehiel (known as “Hiel”, note typo on State monument) was a Major in the New York State Militia during the War of 1812. The area around Lake Ontario was very active in the War as the new United States invaded the British (in current Canada) three different times. When the British forces took control of Fort Ontario, a few miles west in now Oswego, NY, many of Stone’s militia took refuge in Scriba and used his cabin as a hospital for the wounded. Jehiel Stone’s gravesite is located in the Hillside Cemetery a short distance down the road from the marker in the photo.



A separate 5-ton boulder and bronze plaque were erected adjacent to the marker by the Township to commemorate Jehiel Stone’s service to the Town and the location of his log cabin.

Not all of our relatives were on the side of the American Revolution! It is said that approximately 1/3 of colonists remained loyal to the British Crown and they were referred to as “Tories”.

Jehiel Stone’s father, **Thomas Stone**, was a patriot who died in the Revolutionary War. Thomas’s 2nd cousin was **Joel Stone**. Joel (1749-1833) was a merchant in Litchfield, CT when the colonial

revolution broke out. He was a “Loyalist” (loyal to Britain’s monarchy) and the local Revolutionaries confiscated his business, house, and land then valued at £1,500. Joel left the area and served as a volunteer with British Forces in New York as the Revolution began, but was captured and imprisoned at Fairfield, CT. He escaped and eventually moved to the British-controlled area now known as Cornwall, Ontario, Canada in 1787. He was granted a 700-acre tract on the west side of the Gananoque River. **Joel Stone** then served in the War of 1812 against the United States, and fought to repel the Americans. He is today recognized as the founder of the city of Gananoque, Ontario, Canada and there are two municipal parks and a city street named for him. Thus, the two cousins **Jehiel and Joel Stone**, lived on opposite sides of the water, and served in the militaries of two different



countries at war with each other. Based on current events, there are still differences on each side of the water.

With Best Intentions – We Sometimes Make Mistakes

We know that a tremendous amount of work, over many years, was done at the Stone Street Cemetery repairing fallen and broken gravestones, building and painting the fence, and making the area suitable for grass mowing. There is an entry in the Reunion’s 1990 minutes that describes the first part of a mistaken action. **Dayton Birchard** described how he and his brother **Don Birchard** noticed a sunken gravesite adjacent to the gravesite and headstone of **Calvin Luther Leet (1826-1872)**. There was a small white marker at the unknown gravesite with no legible information. Adjacent to that were the graves of two young Leet boys who had died while Calvin was away at the Civil War. They knew that Calvin’s wife, **Arabella Canfield (Stone) Leet**, was not otherwise accounted for, so they purchased a new granite marker with Arabella’s name on it and placed it next to Calvin’s grave (see photo). In 1990, a wonderful letter was received by **Mabel (Birchard) Gardner**, then Secretary of the Reunion. The letter was from **Phyllis Elizabeth (Leet) Schultz** of Fairmont, Minnesota, the g-g-granddaughter of Arabella Stone. She included photos of Arabella’s grave and monument in Fairmont, Minnesota! After the confusion settled, Dayton and Don recognized the error, and had new wording engraved on the gravestone at Stone Street, clarifying that it was a “cenotaph” (meaning that the remains are not



actually present). But that did not answer the question of who was actually buried next to Calvin Luther Leet?

In 2026 while working on this Newsletter, we began to research the life of **Captain Luther Leet (1763-1831)**, a Revolutionary War veteran. We came upon an entry on the Ancestry.com website by the very same **Phyllis (Leet) Schultz** (the author of the 1990 letter above) that said that her g-g-g-grandfather was buried at the Stone Street Cemetery, next to his grandson, in an unmarked grave. This seemed to answer the question about the unknown burial at Stone Street. Unfortunately, Phyllis Elizabeth (Leet) Schultz died January 6, 2026, before we could contact

her. Although it appears that we now know who is buried in that unmarked grave, the story needs

a happy ending, so we hope to have follow-up information in a future newsletter.

Donations

If you wish to contribute toward the activities of our association, including the mailings, website, and maintenance and care of the Stone Street Cemetery, we would appreciate any donation. Contributions made as remembrances are welcome and will be acknowledged. Please make checks payable to SSCPA and mail to SSCPA, c/o Eileen Birchard 1704 Stone Street, Montrose, PA 18801. Donations to SSCPA qualify as charitable deductions.

Please Keep in Touch!

Please keep in touch with family news and vital statistics updates. If you have suggestions for newsletter topics or would like to know something about your Stone family genealogy, please contact any of us.

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